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CONTACT:
Brad Luna
(202) 225-2701

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Carson Announces Over \$100,000 For Rural Oklahoma Volunteer Fire
Depts.***

Will Provide Over \$100,000 For Fire Operations and Firefighter Safety

Washington, D.C. --

Eastern Oklahoma Congressman Brad Carson (D-OK) announced today that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will award Eastern Oklahoma Volunteer Fire Departments a grant of \$105,000 to purchase equipment. The grant is through FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

"I am very pleased to announce this grant to the Volunteer Fire Departments in Eastern Oklahoma," Congressman Carson said. "Volunteer fire departments across Oklahoma greatly need assistance to provide the necessary equipment and training for their firefighters. The Fire Grant has been an incredibly successful program that has improved thousands of fire departments across our nation."

Congressman Carson has been a lead supporter for the Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program. When the program was targeted for budget cuts, Congressman Carson called on President Bush to fully fund the program. The Congressman has also been aggressive in promoting the program to volunteer departments across Eastern Oklahoma. In March of this year, he compiled a booklet of how to apply for a fire grant, tips on applications, grants available to rural fire departments and other useful information that would assist Eastern Oklahoma fire departments to receive their fair share of federal funding. Congressman Carson also wrote over fifty letters of recommendation on behalf of fire departments in his district. Last year, thirty-one departments in the Second District were awarded over \$1.2 million in assistance.

For the 2003 program, Congress appropriated, \$750 million in direct assistance in support of the nation's firefighters and the services they deliver. This year, FEMA, received approximately 19,950 applications for the 2003 grant program. The application period closed in early April 2003 and the total request of all departments, including the non-federal share, totaled approximately \$2.5 billion.

Brushy Volunteer Fire Department \$18,648
Post Mtn. Volunteer Fire Department \$24,673
McCurtain Volunteer Fire Department \$8,343
Paradise Point Volunteer Fire Department \$14,038
Strang Volunteer Fire Department \$16,146
Cowskin Volunteer Fire Department \$23,116
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